



# The Houston–Stockholm Pipeline

One Attorney's Passion for Duke Ellington's Music,  
and a Texas Treasury of Swedish Concerts

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Association for Recorded Sound Collections  
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# Rhodes S. Baker, Jr. (1912–1967)

Born in Dallas

Followed in father's footsteps as attorney and collector

Tax attorney with Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. after army service  
(March 1944– January 1946)

Opportunities to see and hear Ellington

Moved to Houston in 1951

# Acquisition: Fall, 1968

## ELLINGTON-BAKER COLLECTION

\$4,500.00

24 boxes of phonorecords, approximately half of which are LP.  
A group of LP phonorecords, unboxed, approximately 100.  
5 boxes of tapes, mostly on 7-inch reels.  
9 loose leaf notebooks with annotated lists and discographies.  
18 paperbound and hard bound books, both biography and discography.  
1 box of clippings with a large, unused scrapbook to put them in.  
1 2-drawer metal card cabinet with a partially completed card catalog.  
1 envelope of pictures.  
Plus various loose typewritten and hand written pages of lists and notes.

Mrs. Baker has consented to loan us her husband's correspondence files which will be of great help to us in cataloging the collection, establishing sources, dates, prices, etc.

September 17, 1968

Vernon Martin  
Music Librarian

## Ellington Collection Acquired By NTSU

North Texas State University has acquired a collection of books, recordings, tapes and discographies of the work of the famous jazz musician Duke Ellington.

NTSU Lab Band Director Leon Breeden and Vernon Martin, music librarian, announced the collection was purchased from the widow of a prominent Houston attorney, Rhodes Baker.

The collection includes approximately 1,000 records, plus transcriptions and tapes of rehearsals, broadcasts and interviews, and biographies and discographies of the composer.

Ellington performed with the NTSU 1 O'Clock Lab Band in June, 1967, at the White House

dinner honoring the King and Queen of Thailand. The composer joined the Lab Band as they played his theme song, "Take the A Train."

Ellington, who has been called "one of America's great composers," received an honorary degree as doctor of music from Yale University in 1967, and was recommended for an honorary citation by the Pulitzer Prize music jury in 1965.

Ellington's own jazz orchestra, formed about 1927, was one of the first musical groups to be sent abroad by the U.S. State Department. This first trip was in 1933. In 1939 the Ellington Orchestra performed a 25-concert European tour.

His first Sacred Concert, in

Grace Cathedral of San Francisco, was an innovation for a jazz musician and an immediate success. The second Sacred Concert premiered early this year in New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

NTSU's new collection was assembled by Baker, an ardent jazz buff, who collected everything recorded by Ellington.

All recorded material in the collection will be transferred to tape for use by music students at NTSU, while the books and other material will be absorbed into the school's 60,000 piece music research library.

— "Super-Righ

# Reel-to-reel tapes

Organizational scheme: Baker put content wherever he had room on a tape track.

Some info from prior inquiries at UNT (early 1990s, circa 2009), containers

Digitized by George Blood, late 2015– early 2016

Workflow: Listen, list tunes and timestamps, check discography for match (probable or definite)

Best represented year by far is 1963, with at least 55 instances of content.

Other concert, radio, or TV recordings span 1934 through October 1967 (Baker died November 25, 1967)





# Benny Aasland (1920–1996)

Also spelled Åslund

Founder of the Duke Ellington Music Society

"Since my first meeting with the Ellington sounds I tried to gather as much information on every kind of activity in connection with Duke, his orchestra members, and music. Domestic and foreign papers and mags were thoroughly investigated. There was no aim to it. I just felt it in some way added some dimension to the 'digging' of the music."



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# Of interest in this collection

Aasland's messages to Rhodes Baker

Openly discoverable, detailed description

Reference to open-source discography (thanks, Ellingtonia!)

Other Ellington recordings of different provenance

The collection as the sum of its individual components

Even for released recordings, the unedited version is informative

Hours and hours of Ellington, with some Basie and Harry James

# Stockholm: Konserthuset, March 9, 1964

Benny Aasland's introduction

Backstage sounds

“Perdido” – Rolf Ericson, soloist





# Interview: Harry Carney

Talks about trips to Sweden



# Interview: Duke Ellington, August 2, 1965

After receiving the Bronze Medal of the  
City of New York

Probably WPIX per Ellingtonia.com



# Interview: Ellington with Ed Case, Houston, KTRH

Collection has two Ellington interviews with Ed Case. Both mention Tanglewood/Arthur Fiedler; one mentions Japan.

Both appear to be after the 9/11/1964 interview with Ed Case cited in Ellingtonia.



# Happy birthday, Ozzie Bailey! (November 6, 1958)

Goteborg, Sweden.

Container was mislabeled. The fact that it was Ozzie Bailey's birthday helped confirm the actual date (along with other discographical evidence)



CONCERT, GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN, NOVEMBER 18, 1958:

# Rehearsal for Swedish telecast, February 7, 1963

“Take Love Easy,” with Alice Babs



1963:

I: 4 June, 5 June (Pt. 1)

I: 5 June, 6 June

I: 6 June (concl.), 7 June

I: From "ARENA" (June), 8 June,

& from "DANS IN", 8 June

(first part).

(REEL N<sup>o</sup> 1.)

1963:

I: TV, 7 Febr. (Pt. 1)

II: TV, 7 Febr. (concl.).

II: 9 June (concl.).

Ferrodynamics

BRAND FIVE MAGNETIC RECORDING TAPE

IV: Broadcast, 19 June.

(REEL N<sup>o</sup> 3.)

1963:

I: "DANS N", 8 June (std.)

II: "DANS IN", 8 June (std.)

III: "DANS IN", 8 June (concl.),

& intro of show, 9 June,

IV: 9 June (std), Short

introduction back stage,

9 June, and the last

show, 9 June (Pt. 1).

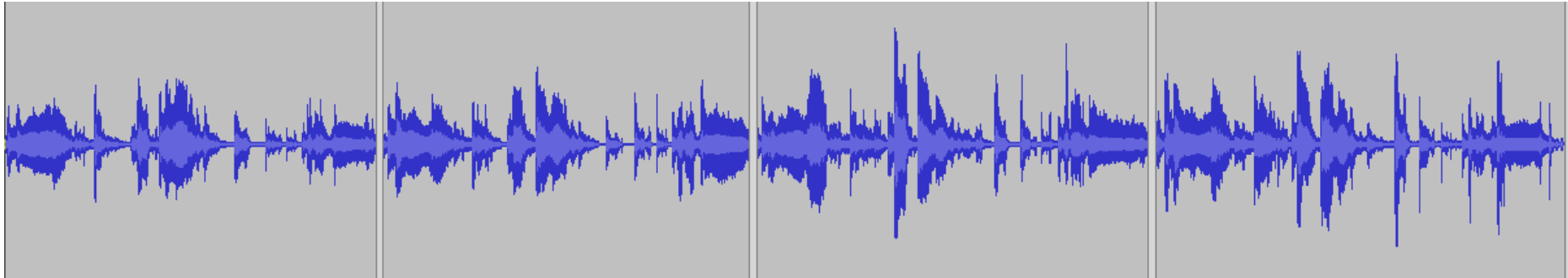
(REEL N<sup>o</sup> 2.)



# Comparing four performances in one week

Johnny Hodges, last “A” section and ending of “I Got It Bad”

Stockholm, Tivoli Girona Lund, identified as June 4, 5, 6, 9, 1963



I could go on...



# Where to browse

<http://findingaids.library.unt.edu> –

>

Letter “B” ➞

Rhodes S. Baker, Jr. Collection,  
1924–1990 –>

Series 3: Tapes

## Series 3: Tapes

Items are numbered by their reel (generally B-##), and where there is unissued material, reels are numbered by up to four individual tracks (generally B-##-#). Descriptions frequently refer to the openly accessible discography at Ellingtonia.com.

### Item B-4 1: Goteborg, Sweden, 1958 November 6



File number 001. No exact match in Ellingtonia. Date mislabeled as 11/18/1958, which would be in Switzerland (playlist doesn't match). Intro by Aasland says Sweden. All selections released on this track (tracks Ellingtonia calls unissued don't appear, and recording runs straight through). Date confirmed on next track.

### Item B-4 2: Goteborg, Sweden, 1958 November 6



File number 001. Playing of Happy Birthday for Ozzie Bailey's birthday matches second concert on 11/6. First two and last medley selections unissued. Happy Birthday also unissued. Ellingtonia lists Hi Fi Fo Fum as unissued, but it does not appear on the recording.

### Item B-5 1: Stockholm, Sweden, 1959 September 26



File number 002. Mislabeled as 9/29/1959. Presence of Passion Flower

Thank you!

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